



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Joe Manchin III
Governor

Martha Yeager Walker
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: All EMS Providers

FROM: Deron E. Wilkes, Chief of Operations

DATE: 24 June 2009

SUBJECT: **Extended wait times at receiving Emergency Departments**

As many of you are aware, EMS systems appear to be experiencing extended wait times at several of the state's hospitals. We have anecdotally heard of wait times exceeding five (5) hours – these occurrences of "Patient Parking" seem to be increasing in frequency. In order to identify the true issues and develop a solution, it is necessary to quantify the instances of excessively long wait times at receiving facilities.

Therefore, in an effort to get a true picture of when and where transfer delays are occurring, the Office of EMS is asking for your help. During the month of July, EMS providers are being asked to **report any call when the wait time exceeds fifteen (15) minutes**. (*Wait time is defined as from your arrival at the emergency department until the patient is removed from your cot.*) Using this data, we hope to assist the affected agencies and hospitals to develop resolutions to the identified issues.

The reporting mechanism for these instances will be through the West Virginia Office of EMS webpage. By visiting www.wvoems.org and clicking on the "Wait Time Study" link you will be sent to a form which will collect several data points. The points will include:

- EMS Agency, transporting unit, and EMS personnel involved.
- Date and arrival time at emergency department.
- Date and time care was transferred (the patient was removed from your cot).
- Treatment provided in-hospital during the delay (O2, ECG monitoring, medication administration, etc...)
- Other comments.

BUREAU FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
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The submitted data will be used to determine the frequency of “patient parking” and then to assist with the development of hospital or agency specific resolution plans. Our ability to determine the problems and find solutions is only as good as the data we are able to collect. Once we can identify where, when, and, hopefully, why these events are occurring and are able to develop resolution plans, then we can develop a mechanism for follow-up monitoring.

Please take the time to assist us in addressing this serious issue. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or ideas about how to address this issue. I can be reached by email (Deron.E.Wilkes@wv.gov) or by telephone (304.558.3956).

**To report “Patient Parking”
Go to
www.WVOEMS.org
and click on the
“*Wait Time Study*”
link.**

cc: William Ramsey, M.D.
Office of EMS staff
WV EMS TSN regional field office staff